

REMARKS

Applicants submit this Preliminary Amendment in response to a Final Office Action mailed April 6, 2001 and pursuant to filing a Continued Prosecution Application in the above-identified matter. Enclosed herewith is a Petition requesting a three-month extension of time for extending the deadline for filing a response from July 6, 2001, to and including October 6, 2001.

As set forth above, Applicants have cancelled claims 3-8 and 11-38 from the present application and have added new claims 40-59. New claims 40-59 are fully supported by the Specification and introduce no new matter.

In view of the above amendment and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that all of the claims pending in this application possess the requisite novelty, utility and unobviousness necessary to warrant their immediate allowance. If, however, for any reason the Examiner does not believe that such action can be taken at this time, it is respectfully requested that he telephone Applicants' attorneys at (908) 654-5000 in order to overcome any objections that may remain.

If there are any additional charges in connection with this Preliminary Amendment the Examiner is authorized to charge Applicants' Deposit Account No. 12-1095 therefor.

Respectfully submitted,

LERNER, DAVID, LITTENBERG,
KRUMHOLZ & MENTLIK, LLP


MICHAEL J. DOHERTY

Reg. No. 40,592

600 South Avenue West
Westfield, NJ 07090-1497
Telephone: (908) 654-5000
Facsimile: (908) 654-7866